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editions preceeding this; a careful editing of the text with some emendations, and variant readings at the foot of the page; besides a few pages of Notes and a Glossary. Textual changes are indicated in all cases either by italics, or, if additions, by bracketed words,—a most commendable practice. The notes are mainly given up to indicating the close relation between the Old English and the Vulgate from which the translation was, of course, made. The glossary is concise, but ample for a book, the contents of which is so familiar. But one improvement can be suggested, and the reviewer recognizes this as a matter of personal judgment, rather than one which would materially affect the use of the book. If the paragraphing of the original text were not to be followed, we should have preferred to see the divisions of the revised version chosen rather than the old "verses."

The present edition ought to be of special value in helping to introduce the sadly neglected study of the older language into the schools. One difficulty hitherto has been that easy prose texts were not available. But this cannot longer be said, when such a neat and handy book as that of Dr. Bright may be so readily purchased. We trust, also, that the complete edition of the Gospels will not be long delayed. Such an edition is as necessary for scholarly work as this single Gospel for school use.

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ENGLISH LITERATURE.

Beowulf. Aeltestes deutsches Heldengedicht.

Aus dem Angelsächsischen übertragen von P. Hoffmann. Oerlag von Herm. Liebich, Züllichau: 8vo, pp. iii, 183, 1893.

THIS is a book that deserves some praise and much blame. Hoffmann has given us the last and the most readable of all the different German translations of 'Beowulf'; the style is simple and easy, and the ear is not annoyed by a conscious or clumsy striving after effect. In respect to meter he makes a new departure, and uses the verse of the 'Nibelungenlied' with a rather free hand, but quite skillfully. He has a clever trick of versifying and his

rime is accurate, but he lacks the true spirit of poetry, and often adds a touch that mutilates the sense or altogether mars the simple beauty of the original. For example, *þær him hel onfengr* (l. 852), is rendered "die tiefe Hölle nahm ihn auf"; and again,

*þæt heo þone fyrdhom þurhfon ne mihte
locene leoðosyrca laðan fingrum,*

(l. 1504-5)

is translated

"Mit ihren grausen Fängen die Brünne wollte sie,
Das Kettenhemd, durchboren, das war verlor'ne Müh'."

Such examples are very frequent, and the author shows the same lack of true feeling when the sonorous and poetical name, *Heorot*, is translated into "Hirschburg."

These are, however, minor faults and the translation in itself may be called good, very good, but it would be too much to say that it correctly represents the original or gives even a fair idea of it. In fact, Hoffmann's translation is no more like 'Beowulf' than a regiment on dress parade is like the same regiment in battle. The rugged force and picturesqueness of the original is toned down and at times entirely lost. The description of the pool on the lonely moor (ll. 1357-1376), loses half its horror in the translation. The translation is too modern in tone,—this is its great weakness. In attempting to correct the obscurity of the earlier translators our author has gone too far, and many suggestive Anglo-Saxon words (such as *beodgeneatas*, l. 343), which could be easily translated into corresponding German words, have been diluted into phrases. The epic flavor of the whole piece is adulterated, and Beowulf himself undergoes such a change of dress that we hardly recognise our old hero. Most of these faults are due to the choice of meter, which renders diffuseness of expression almost necessary, and causes the author to resort to much padding to fill out his line. He even adds some similes to the four already in 'Beowulf'; "wie Wetterstrahlen" (p. 68); "dem Strahl des Blitzes gleich" (p. 117).

The text is very well adhered to, and the author has omitted only a few lines in the last part that are mere repetitions. On the other

1 To prevent confusion, the edition of 'Beowulf' quoted is the one Hoffmann has used, viz., Grein, 1867.

hand, the 'Finnsburg Fragment' has been inserted in the body of the text after l. 1067 (Grein), and the author has undertaken "what no one before him has yet attempted," namely, to write for the 'Fragment' a beginning and an end! The following are the lines in question (p. 44):—

In Finnesburg der Feste ein Held der Warte pfleg
Auf dem hohen Walle, noch nahte nicht der Tag;
Da stieg ein blutiger Glanz empor am Meeresstrand
Als ob in Flammen stünde der Himmel und das Land.

"Was zuckt und gleisst da drüben, wie ferner Blitze
Sprühen?"

Was leuchtet dort und lodert wie lichter Lohe Glühn?"
So sprach der junge Kriegsfürst, etc.

Then follows the 'Fragment,' and then Hoffmann's addition (p. 46):—

"Wen hat das Schwert gefressen der Streiter Dein, der
jungen?"

Da sprach der edle Degen: "Nun sei dem Schöpfer
Dank,
Dass meinen holden Freunden solch' schöner Sieg gelang!
Der keiner ist gefallen! Mir zum Gedächtnissmahl
Den Hügel türnet; denn schauen soll ich der Seligen
Saal."

Hoffmann has thus kept on very safe ground, and the general utility of the translation is certainly increased by this setting.

Hoffmann uses Grein's text of 1867, and, although he says it is not his purpose to give a critical translation, still it is a pity he does not depart from Grein enough to avoid many glaring errors which later criticism has corrected. For example, he makes the cavern lighted up by the gleaming of the sword (l. 1570), and makes Grendel carry a sack over his shoulder to receive plunder (l. 2085),—and many such instances could be brought forward. To the student of Anglo-Saxon the value of this book may be said to be *nil*; beyond the Grein of 1867 the author does not go, many of his statements are extremely careless, and he shows the lack not only of the critical faculty but of a critical conscience.

In the preface he says that the translation of Simrock (1859) is 'the first which truly represents the beauty of the poem,' which might be true or not as far as he is concerned, for a line or two above he admits that he has not read Ettmüller's translation (1840), or Grein's (1857). Then after properly characterising the translation of Wolzogen (1872), he says; "Seit

Wolzogen hat Niemand, wie es scheint, den Mut gefunden eine neue Uebertragung zu wagen," entirely overlooking a translation by Zinsser² in 1881. In this connection should also be mentioned the revised edition of Grein's translation, published in 1883 after his death.

But the two faults mentioned above, the lack of a critical faculty and of a critical conscience, become very conspicuous in the forty-five pages of notes, which the author has added to his translation. These may be properly characterised as worthless. The fountain of the author's knowledge seems to be Simrock, only tinged with his own unreasoning sense of what might have been. Of the great mass of modern criticism the author appears to be entirely ignorant, and there is not so much as a foot-note or reference to any critical opinion throughout the book. The author gives us first a short "Geschichte des Textes" (p. 139), which is merely an abstract of Grein's 'Beowulf,' Cassel, 1867, p. 181, most of the words and phrases being identical. Hoffmann has omitted to mention this fact.

He next attempts to fix 'Beowulf' chronologically by a comparison with 'Widsiþ,' where some of the princes mentioned are historical, giving us in very confused form, but as an original argument, matter that has been common property since the time of Kemble. In an extended and somewhat mechanical account of early Germanic life and manners (pp. 146-164), formulated from scattered lines in the 'Beowulf,' there is nothing of much interest; it is only a fairly good presentation of what has been said much better elsewhere.

In a note dealing with the fight at Finnsburg, Hoffmann refers most indefinitely to a story in Grässe's 'Preussischen Sagen,' where, he says, "erscheint auf den Inseln der Nordsee noch ein Nachklang dieses Kampfes," from which he draws several conclusions. Upon investigation this turns out to be the old, old story. The reference to the 'Sagenbuch' is Vol. ii, p. 1012, No. 1245, "Der Meermann und die Zwerge auf Sylt," but this tale is taken from Hansen's 'Friesische Sagen,' Altona, 1858, p.

² A portion of this only, comprising the first 837 lines of 'Beowulf,' was published in the *Jahresbericht über die Real-schule zu Forbach*, 1881.

52 ff., and the whole matter of the island of Sylt is treated by Möller, 'Das altenglische Volksepos,' Kiel, 1883, p. 74 ff., where references to Hansen are given and the saga is quoted.

Hoffmann next compares the story of *þryþo* (*Modþryþo* as he calls her) with the Anglian saga of Queen Orda (or Drida), which has been a more than twice told tale since Grein completed Kemble's discovery by the identification of *þryþo* with Drida. Hoffmann brings this forward without acknowledging any indebtedness.

All that is told on p. 168 concerning the *Brosinga mene* can be found in Simrock, p. 185-86, although again our author does not supply the cross-reference. The same may be said of the note on *Hygelac*, p. 169; Simrock, p. 183-185, has covered the same ground. There is a long note on *Ongenþeow* (p. 170 ff.) containing matter all given by Simrock (p. 191-2); the only new or original thing adduced is the almost groundless guess that the woman over whom *Hæthcyn* and *Ongenþeow* fought at *Hrefnesholt* was the sister or daughter of *Meaca*, a Merovingian prince mentioned by the 'Widsið.' Hoffmann refuses to believe that the account of Sigmund's fight with the dragon has anything to do with the Siegfried saga, but thinks it is independent and original; his only reason seems to be,—“es ist eben von den deutschen Sagen sehr Vieles verloren gegangen” (p. 174).

In conclusion the author considers the poetical value of the 'Beowulf,' following the views of Simrock (p. 194-196), in the main, but departing from him in one important particular, namely, the harm done by the Christian revision. Hoffmann here takes occasion to affirm with great positiveness his belief that the Christian element is an original trait of the poem, but he fails to show that he has any right to formulate an opinion on the subject.

The author's object in writing this book was, as he tells us, a patriotic one, and he keeps this aim ever before him. He calls 'Beowulf' the "ältestes deutsches Heldengedicht," and except for two or three casual references to the Anglo-Saxon, he speaks of it as if it were an Old High German epic. This book may extend the popular knowledge of old German-

ic life, for it is very pleasant reading, and so accomplish the author's avowed object,—and let us hope it may, but there can be no valid excuse for giving such careless and unscientific work to the public.

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GERMAN LITERATURE.

Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur von MAX KOCH. Stuttgart: G. J. Göschen'sche Verlagshandlung, 1893. (Sammlung Göschen No. 31.) 8vo, pp. 278. Preis M. 0,80.

THE mere fact that a scholar like Prof. Koch, the author of many important treatises on subjects connected with the German and English literatures, the editor of several volumes in Kürschner's 'National Litteratur,' and that important periodical *Zeitschrift f. vergleichende Litteraturgeschichte*, and one of the greatest authorities on Richard Wagner, is the author of the little book before us, should be warrant enough that it is valuable, and is free from the faults of most popular or concise works on the subject.

Prof. Koch's intimate knowledge of German literature and his keen appreciation of the influence of foreign, particularly of English, thought on Germany, qualify him singularly well for the task of presenting the evolution of German letters; and he has, consequently, managed to put into two hundred and seventy-two pages the maximum amount of valuable and scholarly information compatible with clearness.

The book is divided into three sections: i. Aelteste Zeit und Mittelalter, ii. Reformation und Renaissance, iii. Das achtzehnte und neunzehnte Jahrhundert, each of which is subdivided into five or six chapters. The last of these, significantly enough, is entitled, 'Von Goethe's Tod bis zu den Bayreuther Festspielen,' Prof. Koch thus giving Wagner that eminent position in German literature which is due to him, and which has hitherto been granted him only in music. At the beginning of each section and of each chapter are footnotes, which contain lists of the most important works dealing with the period under treatment. The fact that important works only are quoted will be a source of pleasure to